



THE FARMHOUSE ART COLLECTION

**A JOURNEY THROUGH THE ISRAELI EXPERIENCE
AT BAT SHLOMO VINEYARDS**

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INTRODUCTION

When I first came upon Bat Shlomo, I knew that I had found a bit of magic. Down the single street of this tiny moshava stood its thirteen original homes, once housing the pioneering men and women who tended to the fields below. I saw in Bat Shlomo a remarkable piece of living history. In truth, I had discovered a place that spoke deeply to my own experience as an Israeli. I yearned to help others connect to their own sense of identity, to this land and its people.

The collection of art at The Farmhouse has been carefully curated to reflect our shared experience in the Land of Israel. Each piece captures a bit of what it is to be Israeli - our adversity, creativity, resilience and triumph. Whether looking at the 864 colored tiles of Israeli earth (*Untitled*, Ayala Tzur), the leather sculpture of a sprinkler system from Kibbutz Naan (*Naan Irrigation Solution*, Ronen Raz), or the photograph of a young woman reading a book by David Ben-Gurion (*Tourist Reading on the Beach in Tel Aviv*, Yom Omer) - each piece is a celebration of the Israeli spirit.

I am forever grateful to Yifat Gurion for understanding my sense of purpose, and introducing me to some of Israel’s most talented young contemporary artists. This collection would not have been possible without her guidance and keen eye. I must also thank Arnon Nir, our brilliant architect. This collection is made more meaningful by the very walls on which it hangs. We’ve photographed many of the pieces set within the home to showcase the intimate relationship between the art and The Farmhouse itself.

My greatest hope is that this collection awakens in each viewer a desire to delve deeper into our shared Israeli story - one of Zionism and rebirth - and to walk away with a sense of optimism for our future as a nation. And then, perhaps most importantly, to pass this story onward. We are a nation of storytellers building our collective future - whether we weave our stories as vines into the ground or images onto the canvas. Art and wine are inextricably linked and central to the Israeli experience. Taken together, they are also delightfully immersive. It is my sincere hope that the beauty and originality of the art transports you on your own personal journey of connection to our past and inspires both your present and future, as it has mine.

Enjoy,



Elie Wurtman



WHERE HISTORY COMES ALIVE

In 1887, the great Jewish benefactor and Zionist visionary, Baron Edmond de Rothschild, first visited the Land of Israel intent on establishing a path to economic prosperity through agriculture. The two villages he founded in the Lower Galilee set into motion a reawakening of an Israeli wine industry which had been dormant for 2,000 years. The first village, Zichron Yaakov, was named in memory of the Baron's father, Jacob. The second, Bat Shlomo, meaning daughter of Solomon, was dedicated to his mother, Baroness Betty de Rothschild.

A prominent figure in French society, Betty was known for her generosity and philanthropy. Among her many entrepreneurial endeavors, she founded organizations committed to advancing the education of women, as well as hospitals in both Jerusalem and Paris. She considered her Jewish identity a source of pride and perpetually showed her deep devotion to the Jewish people. Her strong identity and the passion she exhibited as a social entrepreneur are reflected in the fabric of Bat Shlomo.



FRUIT OF THE VINE

The return of the vine to the Land of Israel is entwined with the return of its people. During his ten-day tour of the Land of Israel in 1887, Baron Edmond de Rothschild promoted the Jewish connection to the land and spoke of the importance of agriculture. The production of kosher wine would create an economic foundation for the nascent Jewish community. The Baron commissioned French oenologists to select varietals that could grow in Israel's hot climate.

Thousands of seedlings of the chosen varietals were imported from the south of France thanks to the Baron. These French vines would flourish into Israel's new wine industry. They continue to support the communities of Zichron Yaakov and Bat Shlomo to this day. Bat Shlomo Vineyards was founded to continue the ancient Israelite tradition of winemaking, remember the pioneers of the First Aliyah and sprout forth an innovative future.



THE FARMHOUSE

The Farmhouse is one of the thirteen original homes settled in 1889 by Bat Shlomo's founders, graduates of the Baron's agricultural school. The stone houses that line the main street of the village are testimony to the pioneers of this country, and inside the Farmhouse, elements from the First Aliyah have been preserved.

The wooden table in the tasting room is constructed from Lebanese cedar brought to the village in its early years. The original blue shutters were imported from Europe by the Rothschilds in the 19th century. These pieces remind us of the past, as we play our role in the ongoing story of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel, connected to the land, innovating for the future and raising a glass to life.



“MAN IS NOT BUT A SMALL PLOT OF LAND”

Shaul Tchernichovsky

The Farmhouse Art Collection at Bat Shlomo Vineyards is composed of works by Israel’s leading contemporary artists. The collection contains paintings, photography, sculpture and textile that together examine the relationship between Israel’s varied geography and landscapes, from the pioneers to the present, with hidden and visible layers of the complex relationship between the land and the people. Among the collection is a piece by Ayala Tzur who gathered clay from the Bat Shlomo Vineyards and other places in Israel; the work reveals the rich spectrum of color in the depths of the earth and in Israeli society. Another work, created from a local plant, is “Hakhshara” (The Preparation) by Ella Littwitz, a series of bronze casts of Yellow Fleabane (*Dittrichia viscosa*). This flower is considered a “pioneer” plant because it is the first to root in soil that has been worked or disrupted.

At Bat Shlomo Vineyards, we believe that creativity and innovation are the distinguishing features of the Israeli people and that supporting local culture contributes to the foundation of a healthy Israeli society. The Farmhouse’s historic buildings frame a view of the First Aliyah from the vantage of today, translating the pioneering values into contemporary times. The art collection, carefully curated by Yifat Gurion, is part of the all-encompassing body and soul experience The Farmhouse offers its guests. The collection reflects our love for the land and our appreciation of the pioneering and creative spirits of the past, present and future.



UNTITLED

AYALA TZUR

Clay and Earth Fragments from
the Land of Israel
2020

Commissioned for The Farmhouse

In her work, the artist Ayala Tzur deals with layers and strata usually found beneath the surface of the earth and hidden from the eye, ancient manuscripts and archeological discoveries. While searching for materials in the field of ceramics, Tzur discovered a unique technique that allows her to create thin sheets of clay.

For The Farmhouse, Tzur created a four-meter mural comprising 864 squares of clay from sites throughout Israel, among them earth collected from the Bat Shlomo Vineyards as well as other vineyards. The artist treats each square of clay as a masterpiece, and her work exposes the natural beauty of the clay of the Land of Israel and the rich material each piece contains.

The process of firing the clay at very high temperatures reveals different shades that expose hints of the past in the same piece of earth: clay deposits from the desert bear witness to the sea that was once there, dark brown earth indicates high concentrations of iron. The various shades of the clay display the fascinating processes over thousands of years that have created the earth beneath our feet. Assembled into one work, the various natural materials present in each shard of clay contrast and complement each other to create a rich mosaic. The diversity and colors that characterize the Land of Israel's many landscapes reflect the varied population that has gathered here from the corners of the earth, a unique and rich mix that makes up our country.

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KISEH (CHAIR)

MICHA ULLMAN

Sand on Paper
2002

Micha Ullman is a renowned Israeli artist and sculptor, and recipient of the Israel Prize (2009). His work concerns memory, history and the relationship between people and nature. Ullman’s piece, “Chair,” is part of a complex body of ongoing work exhibiting sand. The piece utilizes sandy loam on paper and was made by positioning a chair from Ullman’s parents’ home on a piece of paper and using a broom to draw around it. The chair was pulled diagonally across the paper, and its impression in the sand and those made by the broom were fixed with glue spray. The piece does not portray an inanimate object (the chair) but the artist himself; it was inspired by the minimalist art that influences Ullman’s work. This record of the chair, temporarily present yet absent from the piece, is like a phantom symbolizing what was and will not be again, an echo of a presence, bearing a symbolic memory of the home where Ullman grew up. The chair is a recurring theme in Ullman’s work, an expression of the metaphysical connection between earth and heaven, between what is and is not, between creation and the formation of death.

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UNTITLED
GAL WEINSTEIN

Carpet on MDF
2020

Commissioned for The Farmhouse



Gal Weinstein is an award-winning sculptor and artist who represented Israel at the 2017 Venice Biennale. His work makes critical use of historical images from Zionist society and culture in the Land of Israel and the State of Israel. Weinstein examines various mythology by dismantling imagery from early Zionism. In his work, he deconstructs landscapes and reassembles them using unconventional materials such as steel wool, carpet cuts, cladding materials for construction and more.

The work Weinstein created for The Farmhouse continues a series that began in 2002 with his monumental work, "Jezreel Valley," and the follow-up installation, "Nahalal." This piece provides Bat Shlomo a place of respect among the pioneer settlements of the Land of Israel. The agricultural landscape presented like a puzzle is the iconic landscape common in Zionist posters from the beginning of the 20th century, symbolic of the miracle of the flowering wilderness. The rural agricultural landscape elevates Hebrew manual labor and the fulfillment of the "new Jew's" purpose in the Land of Israel. Through the use of landscape imagery, Weinstein asks social and political questions that are at the core of his Israeli identity.
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MALKA (QUEEN)

NITZAN MINTZ

Mixed Media on Canvas
2020

Nitzan Mintz is a visual poet based in Tel Aviv. She incorporates her poems into installations of street art at various locations throughout the city. Her poems are adapted to the history of the location, the character of the neighborhood and visual elements in the space. Beyond her installations in the public space, Mintz also works in the studio using mixed media techniques. Her work combines industrial waste, stencils, paint and words, creating a unique combination of text, shape and color, which characterize her work. In her pieces, she presents only fragments of her poems. At times, the intentionally overlapping letters are difficult to read as they blend with the abstract elements in the background, leaving the work enigmatic, requiring pause and reflection. The painting, “Malka,” describes the neighborhood of Neve Tzedek where Mintz was born over thirty years ago. Now considered one of Tel Aviv’s more prestigious neighborhoods, it is engraved in Mintz’s memory as one with crumbling walls and neglected streets. Residents were poor and abandoned. The poem describes a character named Malka, one of the neighborhood residents. “She would sit on her doorstep and ask me to call a number for her, and she would wait on the line for heaven.” Mintz also describes in her work the transition from the old Neve Tzedek to the new. This is reflected in the words, as well as in her attempt to mimic the texture of the neighborhood walls.

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HAKHSHARA (PREPARATION)

ELLA LITTWITZ

Bronze, *Dittrichia viscosa*
2019

Commissioned for The Farmhouse

Ella Littwitz is a multidisciplinary artist who often examines themes of landscape and nationality. Her installations are concerned with the connection between history, culture and politics and incorporate data from the fields of botany, archeology and geography.

In her piece, “The Preparation,” Littwitz created a series of bronze castings of a prevalent local plant, Yellow Fleabane (*Dittrichia viscosa*), collected from the soil of Bat Shlomo, which she chose to display in its stages of growth. This plant, known for its many medicinal properties, is also regarded as a “pioneer” plant, since it is the first to appear after disruptions or changes to the soil. Which is to say, it is the first settler or the pioneer that takes over bare ground,



before a density of vegetation creates competition between plants. Due to accelerated development since the establishment of the State of Israel, soil disturbances are frequent, thus Yellow Fleabane has become common in its new environment. Its pioneering character and biochemistry prevent the germination and survival of other plants in the area. Littwitz’s choice of this plant speaks to the broad political and cultural connections tied to the process of establishing a national identity in the Land of Israel, from the First Aliyah to the present.

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YEHUDI NODDED (WANDERING JEW)

Yael Meiry

Archival Pigment Print
2016

Yael Meiry is an artist who combines photography with site-specific installations that unite Israeli landscapes with “corporeal landscapes,” raising questions of identity and gender, roots versus detachment, nature and authenticity.

Meiry’s work, “Yehudi Noded” (Wandering Jew), is a photograph of a Spiderwort plant (Tradescantia), known in Hebrew as a wandering Jew, placed in a white space alienated from its natural environment in the earth. The wandering Jew is uprooted from its place, its roots exposed with the protective soil scattered. The plant gained its name from its ability to adapt to different environments and reflects the nature of the Jews who for millennia wandered in exile, but managed to adapt and survive in challenging conditions. The uprooted plant has been turned into something displaced, detached and homeless.

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ZAYIT (OLIVE)

Yael Meiry

Archival Pigment Print
2016

In the work “Zayit” (Olive), a sapling has also been photographed, removed from a planter or the ground to an alien environment. It, too, is a tree full of symbolism; Israel grows some of the largest and most impressive olive trees in the Mediterranean Basin. The olive tree is a potent symbol in Israeli culture with many associations, including the seven-branched Menorah with olive trees on either side (Zechariah 4:11) and the dove of peace with an olive branch in its mouth. Like the wandering Jew, the olive tree is known to be resilient and to live a long time.

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TENTS (SUNSET OVER THE JUDEAN DESERT)

ROEI GREENBERG

Archival Pigment Print
2016

This photograph is one of a series by Roei Greenberg titled “Along the Break,” referring to the Great Rift Valley, in Hebrew the “Syrian-African Break,” which formed 35 million years ago in a tectonic shift as the Eurasian and African plates broke apart. This topographic phenomenon carved out the Jordan Valley, shaping Israel’s borders from north of the Sea of Galilee, south through the Dead Sea to the Red Sea. Road 90, paved through the valley, is the longest highway in Israel. In “Along the Break,” photographed in the Judean Desert, Greenberg borrows the idea of the American road trip traversing vast highways, transferring it to Israel’s limited territory. Choosing the word “break” in naming this series, the artist connects it to other breaks in his biography and thematic questions raised throughout his work: the socio-ideological break of the kibbutz (where Greenberg grew up), the drying of the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee, Palestinian villages abandoned in 1948 and minefields in the Golan Heights. Greenberg’s work is a journey through space, as well as through time.

The photograph “Tents,” acquired for Bat Shlomo, captures a sense of impermanence. The Great Rift Valley serves as a metaphor for the cracks and contradictions in our fragile existence. Greenberg uses a large format camera that allows him to frame poetry and empathy alongside irony and ideological questions captured in the geological expanse. This work, together with the rest of the series, uses ambiguity to create a dialogue between the terrestrial and the sublime.

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THROUGH THE YARN

GILI SHAHAR

Jacquard Weaving
2019

Gili Shahar is an artist and textile designer who employs manual and computerized jacquard weaving techniques. Central to her work is a dialogue between layers of fabric. Slits the artist composes in the fabric reveal new layers, shades and textures. Within the piece of woven fabric, Shahar creates separations: separation from images, from beauty, from materiality. This is accomplished all while giving the viewer an experience of change and impermanence as patterns shift and a new image is revealed. Through the fabric, the artist asks questions examining the creative process itself, not only the final product. After weaving, Shahar cuts the textile, “wounding” it with scissors. In these wounds new beauty is revealed, as inner layers of fabric are exposed, each wound unique. Shahar’s work deals with destruction and renewal, and developing the ability to love even our flaws. The viewer feels a curiosity and a primordial urge to touch the fabric.

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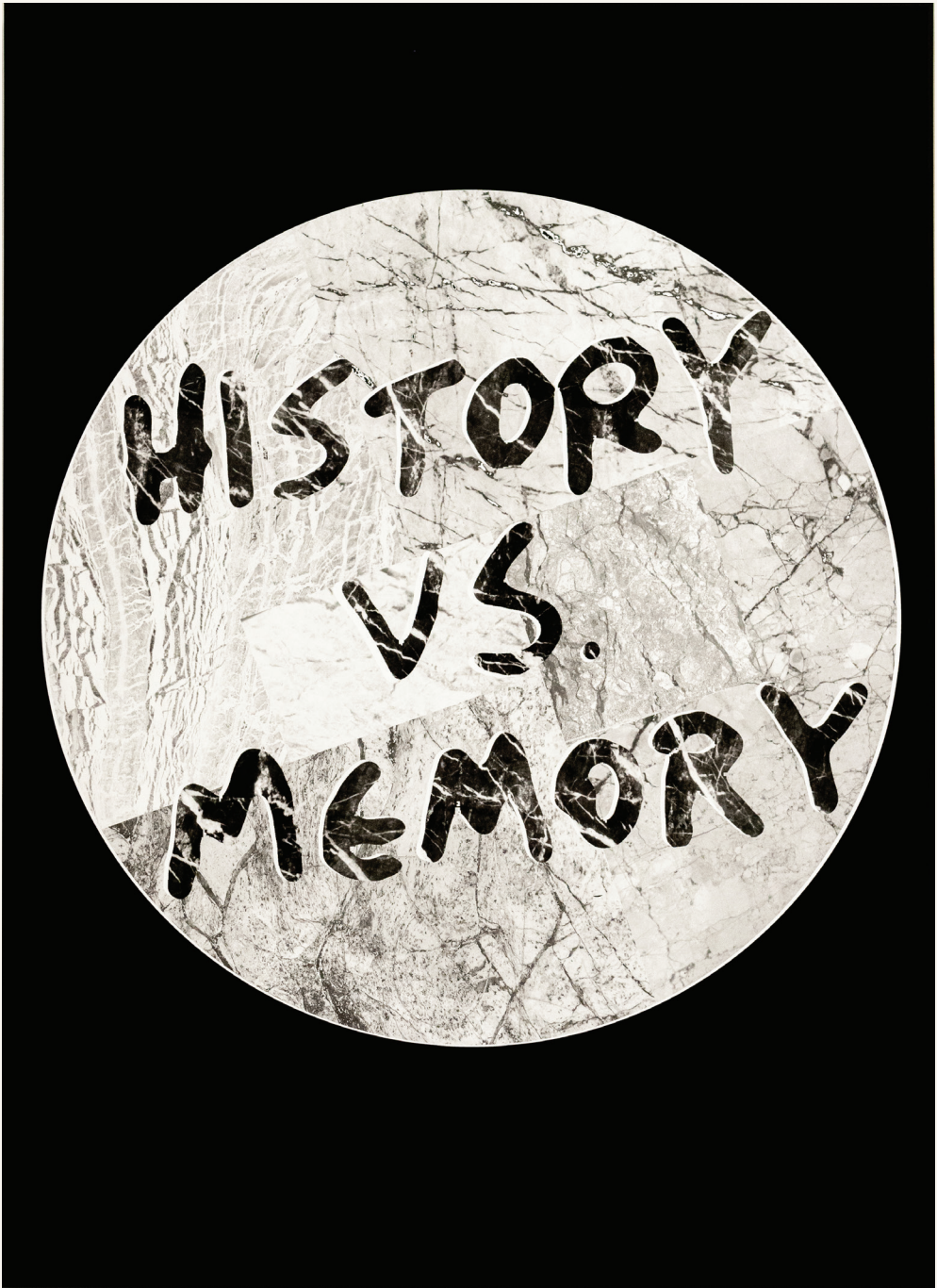
HISTORY VS. MEMORY

ORI CARMELY

Inkjet Print on Paper
2020

Ori Carmely is an artist, architect, researcher and lecturer whose work deals with social issues through video, drawing and performance. His creations often examine the aesthetics of power, as reflected in “History vs. Memory.” This piece was produced as part of a project called “Memorial for a Day,” a temporary installation set up for 24 hours at a bus stop in the Neve Sha’anan neighborhood in south Tel Aviv in 2017. The work was created out of a dialogue with Isaac Newton Pascal, a local musician and immigrant who had been living in Neve Sha’anan for more than fifteen years. Pascal was injured and lost a close friend in a terrorist attack in the neighborhood. Carmely conducted a series of interviews with Pascal about this traumatic experience and how he learned to live with the scars on his soul. The interviews raised questions for Carmely regarding the disparity between personal experiences and private memory versus collective history, which creates new memories - thus the creation of “History vs. Memory.”

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THE NAAN IRRIGATION
SOLUTION

RONEN RAZ

Recycled Leather
2019

Ronen Raz is an artist and fashion designer who serves as the head of the Fashion Design Department at the Avni Institute. His work is reminiscent of techniques employed in sculptures by Claes Oldenburg during the 60s and deals with fantasies characterizing consumerist culture, specifically the desire to purchase products that solve all our problems. Sculptures of soft sewn fabric caricature objects the artist depicts. In his work, “The Naan Irrigation Solution,” Raz sculpts a pipe of a sprinkler irrigation system from leather.

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UNTITLED (RAIN ON SABRA CACTUS)

YANAI MENACHEM

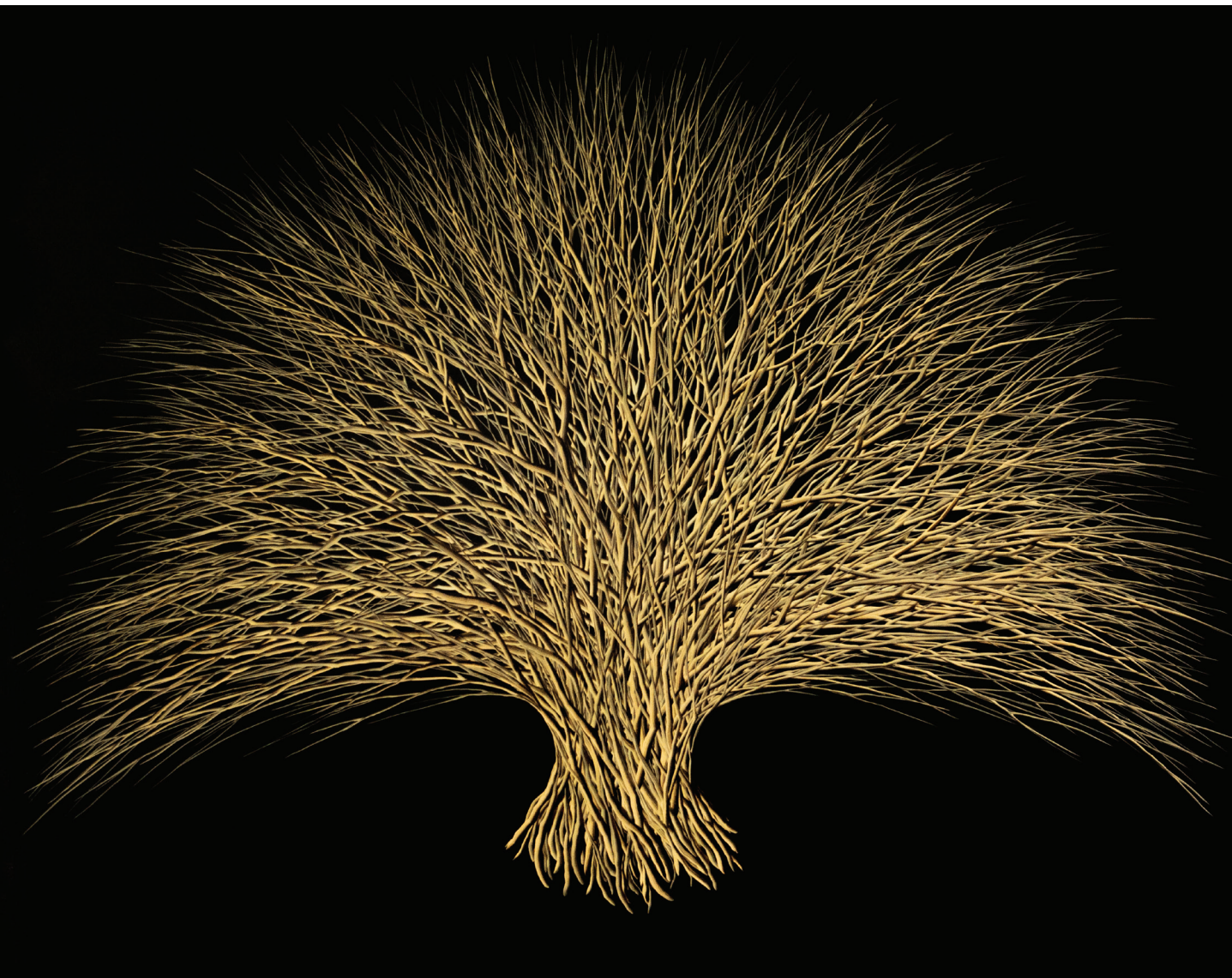
Inkjet on Archive Paper
2018



Currently based in Kibbutz Givat Oz, Yanai Menachem is a photographic artist. After leaving the big city to settle on the kibbutz and raise a family, Menachem noticed that the city bustle of noise and traffic had become an experience of inner turmoil in contrast to his peaceful surroundings. In this photograph, Menachem captures a Barbary fig cactus (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) with clear raindrops settled on its spines. This plant, also called a prickly pear, is often referred to in Hebrew as a “Sabras,” the name of its fruit. It has grown wild in Israel for over 200 years and has traditionally been used as a border crop to divide agricultural plots and suburban houses. Over the years, the term “Sabra” became a nickname for the generation of Israelis born to Zionist immigrants. It is likely the nickname comes from a 1931 article in the *Doar HaYom* newspaper by Ouri Kessary titled “We Are Prickly Pear Spines.” Kessary likened Israeli children to the plant that was both prickly and sweet. This was during a time of discrimination against children of the First Aliyah when members of the Second Aliyah used the term “Sabra” as a slur. Kessary turned “Sabra” into a term of endearment. The Sabra has since become a source of pride for those who raised children on the land longed for through thousands of years of exile.

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TREE

MOSH KASHI

Oil on Canvas
2021

Mosh Kashi is an Israeli painter and artist. A lecturer at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design, he is a recipient of the Advancement of Creativity Award (1997) and the Minister of Education Award (2004). In his work, Kashi raises questions concerning the place of painting today. His paintings are based on imagery from nature, capturing trees, thickets, landscapes and expanses in a moment that is without time or place. Kashi's paintings are created in series, presenting the slow development and exploration of his chosen subject, and exposing how his work changes through a mental and visual evolution. The painting, "Tree," comes from a series that began with Kashi's childhood memories of Jerusalem, where he picked leaves and branches in the Valley of the Cross and dried them in books. After a while, he would remember the dried leaves and open the book to see what had happened to them, to find only their crumbling remains and their impression in the pages. When he began to paint, this memory resurfaced and Kashi wondered what would happen if he tried to dry grass or something bigger like a shrub. "Tree" is part of this investigation, and a series that has continued for years. As Kashi recounts, "I come back to the work once every few years. The tree develops, unfolds and changes with me."

The tree in the painting floats on a dark background; it has a dramatic spirit and a measure of poetry. Within the dark background, the tree radiates concentrated light. The scale of the work gives the viewer the impression of standing before a large body, not a small representation. The choice to represent a childhood memory for Kashi is a means to engage in the simple moments that make up our existence. The painting meets each viewer in a different place, thus the memory of the artist embodied in the tree soaks up the memories and consciousness of others, as well.

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DEKEL (DATE PALM)

NATALIE FELDESMAN

Mixed Technique on Wood
2020

Natalie Feldesman is a multidisciplinary artist who creates installations, sculptures, paintings and videos. Her work focuses on the creation of spaces in which there is no narrative sequence and in which past, present and future meet. Feldesman deals with the questions such as: What are we leaving humanity in the future? What fossils will they find in a million years, and what will they think of us? She examines consumer culture, the relationship between people and nature, technology, and the connection between the past and the future, the real world and the virtual. She uses basic and simple materials such as wood, papier-mâché and plaster, which she connects to video and light. Using multiple layers, her work creates a progression from the two-dimensional to the three- dimensional. Inspired by primitive art, she creates archetypal images connected to dreams, history and daily life. As in an archeological excavation, she creates “ground” layers through which she gradually unearths the discovery underneath.





In the work, “Dekel” (Date Palm), Feldesman refers to one of Israel’s most common trees, the date palm, which is considered an important symbol in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In Judaism, dates are one of the seven species of the Land of Israel listed in the book of Deuteronomy. The fruit is also considered to have medicinal properties and is associated with a virtuous character, such as in the verse, “The righteous will flourish like the date palm” (Psalms 92:13). In ancient Egypt, palm leaves were a symbol of longevity, and the crown of the palm was one of the symbols of Hathor, goddess of life, joy, dancing and fertility. The date palm is also a hallmark of desert beauty. Feldesman’s work, “Dekel,” is part of a series she calls “Mouth of Mountain.”

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SLEEP WALKER

ALEX FARFURI

Pigment Print
2018

Alex Farfuri is a street photographer who documents people and daily life, particularly in Tel Aviv. She is considered one of the most promising contemporary photographers in Israel. Through her photographs she expresses an aesthetic beyond the current standard of beauty, a beauty she reveals in the humanity of those she photographs. She daydreams backstories of passers-by, takes interest in strangers, discovers hidden moments and tries to capture color in any setting. The sun sets her work schedule, and the street is her office. She captures the fleeting moments that compose the history of the city where she lives as she walks along her way.

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TOURIST READING ON THE BEACH IN TEL AVIV

YOM OMER

Inkjet Print
2020

Yom Omer uses an analog camera to take photographs that are documentary in nature, sometimes personal, sometimes escapist, pictures from his home and the street. In the photos, he captures people in everyday situations and investigates human behavior, local culture, physical gestures, and the changes in lighting throughout the day. His street photographs deal with the passion, freedom and idealization of the body. Omer explores contrasts and complexities: natural versus artificial poses, strength and life versus degeneration, reality versus fantasy.

The photograph, "Tourist Reading on the Beach in Tel Aviv," is ironic and humoristic; a woman is seen sunbathing while reading a book with Ben Gurion on the cover. The contrast between the "hedonistic" situation and the Zionist vision that made it possible makes the photograph original and interesting. The photograph captures a moment where the vision of the first Prime Minister of Israel meets the current fulfillment of the State of Israel.

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SEEDS OF HERITAGE

ORNA TAMIR SCHESTOWITZ

Photograph on Ceramic
2018

Orna Tamir Schestowitz is an artist and designer, and in 1996 she published the book "Homes with a Personal Style." This series of bowls Schestowitz created from granular clay, are vessels that hold the riches of the Land of Israel, its roots embedded within the earth from which the bowls were formed. Each bowl bears a picture of a fruit collected from the Galilee orchard of Chef Erez Komarovsky, a tribute to an agricultural heritage of thousands of years. The pottery is printed with a portrait by photographer Dan Perez of produce grown from heirloom seeds with pure genetic material neither engineered nor artificially manipulated. The collection was previously exhibited at the Archaeology Wing of the Israel Museum and at the Israeli President's House.

Tamir Schestowitz sees working in ceramics as a commitment to ancient traditions and local techniques to which she can add her seal. "I want the material and the ceramic work to feel contemporary but not disconnected – remembering and respecting our place, the past and our heritage."

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UNTITLED WORK

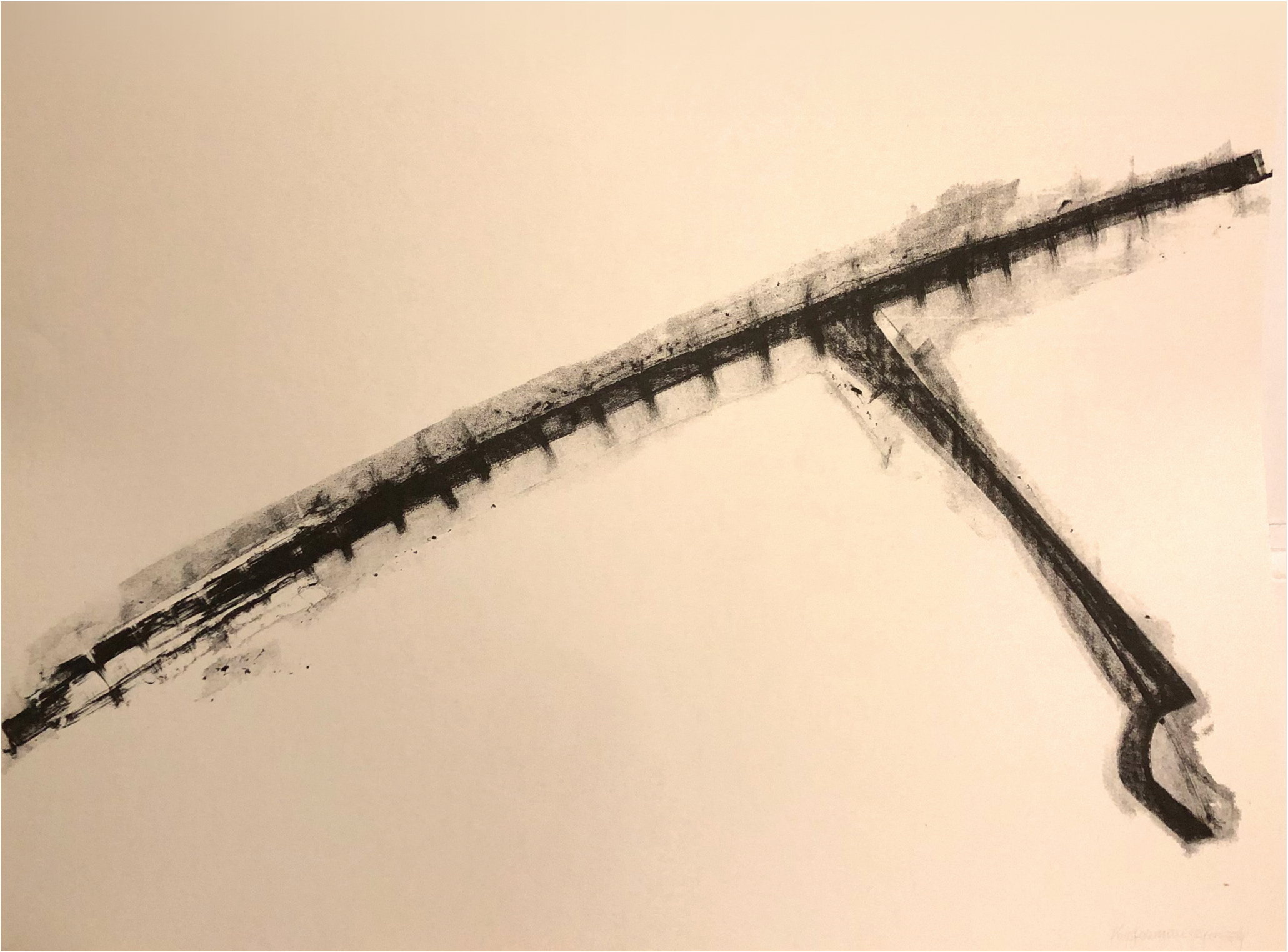
MOSHE KUPFERMAN

Oil on Canvas
date unknown

The artist Moshe Kupferman was born in Poland in 1926 and died in 2003, three years after winning the Israel Prize for Painting. During World War II, Kupferman and his family were deported from their home, and the following years were spent in constant flight. He lost both of his parents in the Holocaust but was able to survive through hard physical labor. His art carries intense expression of his formative years.

Kupferman immigrated to Israel in 1948 and was a founding member of Kibbutz Lohamei HaGeta'ot, where he lived until his death. In Israel, he studied painting and was primarily influenced by the “New Horizons” movement, a dominant stream in Israel during that time. Kupferman's work is based on fixed and rigid patterns that leave no room for chance. The elaborate shapes usually appear in shades of gray, silver and purple; occasionally a green spot glistens from the back. The paintings are built layer upon layer in measured brushstrokes that both add and erase. At the start of his career, Kupferman's work depicted wire fences that emerged from his memories of the Holocaust, but gradually these became more abstract and geometric. Of his work, Kupferman said, “A picture is not an ornament, it is the result of an internal struggle, of search and deliberation.” Elsewhere he added, “I have an historical affiliation with what is called ‘the surviving remnant.’ Look at the canvases, they are grey. People find in them sadness, even more than I do.”

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FIRE INSCRIPTION CEREMONIAL

OHAD MATALON

Photograph
2006



Ohad Matalon is a photographer who takes a philosophical approach to the medium of photography and its inherent possibilities in the digital era. Matalon expands his work through other mediums, including the use of sculpture, gameplay, illustration and performance. He exhibits a social and geopolitical view of the State of Israel while also investigating how photography is presented and observed. Among other things, Matalon is known for documenting the experience in Israel's periphery – development towns and border regions that are home to an Israeli population that is seldom considered or heard.

In "Fire Inscription Ceremonial," Matalon captures two adolescent youth dressed in Israeli Scout uniforms, at night, seated inside a canvas and wood structure of the Star of David. Their gaze faces an invisible horizon outside the frame, and they cast long shadows on the blue and white fabric that envelops them like a tent. The image of strong and idealistic youth, full of hope for the future, echoes Zionist posters from the 1920s-1950s. These posters presented the "New Jew" as a worker, engaged not only with spiritual endeavors but with manual labor. This image stood in sharp contrast to the "Jew in Exile," who was depicted hunched over, with no control over his destiny. In "Fire Inscription Ceremonial," the "New Jew" is embodied in the image of a boy and girl from a new generation, who were born in Israel and are carrying on the Zionist symbols, values and narratives that came before them.

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THE RETURN OF THE YELLOW SQUARE

—
VISH

—
KUPFERMAN'S DREAM

LARRY ABRAMSON

Screen Prints
1988

The three Larry Abramson prints in The Farmhouse collection, two of which are featured here, were created in parallel with his well-known series of “column” paintings exhibited at the Israel Museum in 1989. That series of paintings dealt with vertical composition. Abramson's piece, “The Return of the Yellow Square,” connects to an earlier series of conceptual works, which focused on a square floating among layers of paint and shining from within.

Abramson, born in 1954 in South Africa, is one of Israel's leading artists. He began his work in the early 1970s during the emergence of new art movements in Europe, particularly Neo-Expressionism, which challenged the preceding conventions of Minimalism



and Conceptualism. His paintings relate values of the past, while suggesting an alternative system of ideas and concepts relevant to the complex realities of the Land of Israel.

In “Kupferman's Dream,” Abramson establishes a dialogue of appreciation and criticism with the well-known artist Moshe Kupferman. The piece was created according to the “Kupferman Method” that includes paint smears, expressive brush strokes and a collection of activity.

Furthermore, Abramson's work refers to the “Withering of the Aura,” an idea presented by the Jewish philosopher Walter Benjamin in his philosophical essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (1935). Abramson examines how it is possible to restore the aura to art, even through seemingly inauthentic, artificial means. Benjamin's essay posits that a print is a mechanical reproduction that forfeits the authority of an original painting, a uniqueness worth preserving; but Abramson is interested in how, through this particular action, it is possible to illuminate something from the original. The yellow square in “The Return of the Yellow Square” shines out of the darkness of the purple layers and creates a kind of artificial aura. So too, the white rectangle pops out of the composition in “Kupferman's Dream.”

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CONCEPT AND VISION: Elie Wurtman

CURATOR: Yifat Gurion

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